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تفسير انوار البيان

ILLUMINATING DISCOURSES
on the
NOBLE QURAN

TAFSIR ANWARUL BAYAN

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سورة الاخلاص

Makkan	Surah Ikhlas	Verses 4
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ (1) اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ (2) لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ يُولَدٌ ۝ (3) وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ۝ (4)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Say, "He Allāh is One." (2) "Allāh is Independent." (3) "He has no children and is not anyone's child." (4) "There is none equal to Him."

Although Surah Ikhlas is brief, it makes the fact clear that Allāh Ta'ala is The One and Only worthy of worship and that none shares His attributes. Sayyidina Ubay bin Ka'b رضى الله عنه narrates that Surah Ikhlas was revealed when the polytheists asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them Allāh's lineage.

He narrates that Āmir bin Tufayl and Arbid bin Rabī'ah once came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Āmir said, "O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم! To what do you call us?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "I am calling you towards Allāh." Āmir then said, "Describe Allāh to us. Is He made of gold, silver, iron or wood?" According to another narration, the Jews asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them what Allāh was made of and whether Allāh eats and drinks. It was then that Surah Ikhlas was revealed. Because of their insolence, Arbid was killed by a thunderbolt while Āmir was killed by a plague. ["Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"]

This Surah is called Surah Ikhlas ("the Surah of Sincere Devotion") because it is sincerely devoted to the subject of Oneness of Allah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also referred to this Surah as Surah Ikhlas. ["Durrul Manthūr" v. 6 p. 414]

Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was the first man and the first Nabi (Prophet). It was from him and his wife Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام that mankind multiplied. He taught his children Oneness of Allah and they all worshipped only Allāh. Many generations after him also worshipped only Allāh. Since it was impossible for satan to make people deny the existence of Allāh, he started by indoctrinating them with false beliefs. One of the fundamental beliefs he used to veer them away from Oneness of Allah was to make them believe that Allāh Ta'ala was similar to man in that He had children and required the things man requires.

Another poisonous arrow he shot at them was to make them believe that

among Allāh's creation were beings who also had to be worshipped to attain proximity to Allāh. He convinced them that these beings would intercede for them in Allāh's court if they worshipped them. Using such methods, Satan made many people believe that the angels were Allāh's daughters and that people like Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام were Allāh's sons. He also made them prostrate to idols and sacrifice animals in the names of idols. Idol worship began even before the coming of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. As people fell for Satan's guile, Allāh Ta'āla continued sending the Anbiya (Prophet's) عليهم السلام as well as divine scriptures to this world to guide them. However, the majority of people in every period refused to believe in Oneness of Allah and continued practising polytheism.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم started calling people to Oneness of Allah, polytheism had become so widespread and accepted that the polytheists gaped and said, *"Has he made all the many gods into one god? This is indeed something strange!"* When anything becomes popular, anyone speaking against it is treated with suspicion even though the thing is evil. When polytheism and idolatry became popular in the Arabian peninsula, even the progeny of the stalwart of Oneness of Allah [Sayyidina Ibrahim عليه السلام] stooped to the level of placing 360 idols in the Ka'ba, which he built as a shrine of Oneness of Allah. Arabia was filled with temples and idols that were revered by all.

When these people asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to explain Allāh's lineage, Allāh revealed Surah Ikhlās commanding the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell the people that *"He Allāh is One."* This verse makes it clear that Allāh is Only One of His kind and that none of the creation can be compared to Him in any way.

Furthermore, Allāh states, *"Allāh is Independent."* Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه has mentioned that this means that Allāh needs no one, but that everything needs Allāh. Translating the word *"Samad"* as *"Independent"* does not do justice to the word because the word includes the fact that all are in need of Allāh. 'Ruhul Ma'āni' reports from Ibnul Ambāri رحمه الله عليه that lexicologists are unanimous that the word *"Samad"* refers to a sovereign who is second to none and to whom everyone turns for their needs and all their affairs.

According to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه, the word *"Samad"* refers to a sovereign whose sovereignty is absolute, whose honour is absolute, whose majesty is absolute, whose forbearance is absolute, whose knowledge is absolute, whose wisdom is absolute and whose every fragment of honour and sovereignty is absolute.

"He has no children and is not anyone's child." This verse answers those people who want to know Allāh's lineage. They should know that Allāh Ta'āla has no family at all. There is always a similarity between parent and child. Since none is similar to Allāh at all, He can have neither parents nor children. Allāh Ta'āla says in Surah Maryam, *"They say, 'Rahmān has taken a child.' You have certainly said a grave thing. (The gravity of what you say is so intense that) The heavens may split asunder because of it, the earth may be cleaved open and the mountains may crash to pieces. All this because they ascribed children to Rahmān. It is not befitting of Rahmān to take children. Every thing within the heavens and the earth shall come to Rahmān as*

slaves.” [Surah 19, verses 88-93]

Allāh has been forever and shall remain forever. He had no birth and none was born from Him. The Polytheists who believed that the angels are Allāh’s daughters are wrong just as the Christians are wrong to believe that Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام is Allāh’s son and just as the Jews are wrong to believe that Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام was Allāh’s son. They merely copy what others say without thinking. Allāh Ta’āla says in Surah Taubah, “The Jews say, ‘Uzair is the son of Allāh!’ and the Christians say, ‘Masīh is the son of Allāh!’ These are mere words that emerge from their mouths. They imitate the statements of those who passed before them. May Allāh destroy them! Where are they wandering astray?” [Surah 9, verse 30]

“There is none equal to Him.” This verse negates every type of similarity that people may draw between Allāh and his creation. Only He is worthy of worship, only He has knowledge of everything and only He can fulfil needs. This verse is similar to the verse of Surah Shura where Allāh Ta’āla says, “There is nothing like Him, and He is the All Hearing, the All Seeing.” [Surah 42, verse 11]

In an exceptionally concise manner, the Surah confirms that every good attribute is found in Allāh and it denies that Allāh has any defect.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that people constantly say that Allāh has created everything and then they ask who created Allāh. When this question is posed, one should say, “Allāh is Independent. He has no children and is not anyone’s child. There is none equal to Him.” According to another narration, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised that when this question plagues one’s mind, one should say:

“I believe in Allāh and His apostles عليهم السلام” [Bukhari and Muslim]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has also narrated from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh Ta’āla says, “The son of Ādam has falsified Me when he should not do so. He has also sworn Me when he should not do so. He has falsified Me by saying that I cannot resurrect him whereas I created him the first time and creating the second time is even easier. Man swears me by saying that I have children whereas I am The One, The Independent. I have no children neither am I anyone’s child. There is none equal to Me.” [“Mishkāt” p. 13]

THE VIRTUES OF SURAH IKHLĀS

Sayyidina Abu Sa’īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that a Sahabi (Companion) رضى الله عنه once heard another Sahabi رضى الله عنه repeatedly reciting Surah Ikhlās. When he reported this to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Nabi صلى الله عليه وسلم sensed that he regarded the act as insignificant. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that Surah Ikhlās equalled a third of the Qur’ān. [Bukhari v. 2 p. 750]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told them, “Should I not recite a third of the Qur’ān to you?” the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then recited Surah Ikhlās. [Muslim v. 1 p. 271]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once

appointed a person to lead a military expedition. Whenever this person led the others in Salāh, he always ended every Rakāh by reciting Surah Ikhlas. When the prophet's companions (Sahābah) رضى الله عنهم mentioned this to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he told them to ask the person his reason for doing this. When they asked him, he replied, *"The Surah is a description of Allāh and I love reciting it."* Upon hearing this reply, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the prophet's companions (Sahābah) رضى الله عنهم to tell the person that Allāh loves him as well. [Muslim v. 1 p. 271]

According to a narration of Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه, when the person told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he loved the Surah, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to him, *"Your love for this Surah shall enter you into Heaven."* [Tirmidhi]

Sayyidina Sa'id bin Musayyab رحمه الله عليه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"A palace in Heaven is built for the person who recites Surah Ikhlas ten times and two palaces in Heaven are built for the person who recites Surah Ikhlas twenty times."* Hearing this, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه said, *"O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! In this manner we shall have many palaces built."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Allāh is a Great Giver. He has with him tremendous rewards for as many deeds as you can manage."* [Dārmi v. 3 p. 320]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The person who recites Surah Ikhlas two hundred times shall have fifty years of his sins erased from his record of deeds. Of course, the debts he owes to others will not be waived."* ["Mishkāt" p. 188 from Tirmidhi]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه has also narrated from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when a person recites Surah Ikhlas a hundred times while lying on his right side before sleeping, Allāh will tell him on the Day of Judgment, *"O My slave! Enter Heaven from the right hand side."* [Tirmidhi]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once heard a person reciting Surah Ikhlas, he said, *"It is obligatory for him."* *"What is?"* asked Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه. *"Heaven"* replied the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. [Tirmidhi]

